



West Monkton Parish Council

## ADOPTED

Minutes of the virtual Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Besley, Cavill, Ellis, Elliston, Gage, Hall and Haskins.

In attendance: Mrs A Shepherd, Clerk, Mrs T Cavill, Assistant Clerk, Ms J Pearson, Clerk to Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council, Mr K Perry, Flood Warden, Cllr David Fothergill, County Councillor and Cllr Andrew Pritchard, District Councillor.

### **55/20 To receive any apologies (with reasons), introductions with responsibilities**

Apologies were received from Cllr Tully who experienced technical difficulties trying to connect to the virtual meeting and Cllr Hope.

### **56/20 Declarations of Interest, Dispensation Requests, amendments to the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

- a) Declarations of Interest: No change.
- b) Dispensation Requests: None
- c) Amendments to the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest: none had been notified to the Clerk.

**Public Question Time** *By agreement with the Chairman, the questions raised were answered in the body of PQT, where possible. No decisions*

Cllr David Fothergill provided a Somerset update in relation to the Coronavirus Pandemic and measures that are being put into place in Somerset. There have been three deaths and three are imminent in Somerset. All 5 Districts are working closely together. Command Centre for County is headed by Police.

Somerset has the lowest number of coronavirus deaths in the Country and declared its first death last.

Musgrove Park Hospital is one third full, it is geared up and ready to go.

Care homes coming under attention, need PPE, which will come from London. Food supplies for care homes will come in from government, distribution centres at Shepton, Yeovil (Westlands), Jct 24, Chelston and Butlins. Two care homes will re-open to provide another 140 beds.

Three levels of vulnerability identified totalling between 20,000 and 25,000 people. Food packages are being delivered to each of these.

Schools are closed, hubs for key workers children identified at West Monkton and Musgrove Park. Situation not helped by commercial nurseries making commercial decision to close due to falling numbers.

Quarries have closed and this will impact on supply of tarmacadam.

Police now empowered to levy fines, mechanism not clear, but may use carparking services to apply them and collect.

A countywide phone link is being established for vulnerable people and a central contact for all whether for those requiring support, to report concerns about someone or to volunteer.

Lock down probably timely for Somerset and probably too late for London.

Alun Griffiths contractor at Junction 25 is closing down operations as 2 metre social distancing can't be maintained. This will impact on the schedule for Creech Castle Junction improvements. SCC in talks with government to ensure funding window is extended. WMP Council the only one continuing business as usual by means of conference calling, WMPC is 20th largest council in Somerset. A daily newsletter will now be published and circulated to Parish Councils.

Cllr Andy Pritchard and Cllr Norman Cavill provided a SWT Council report: All car parks now free of charge to provide key workers with free parking.

#### **57/20 Update on advice received from SALC / NALC / SLCC / Government**

Clerk confirmed that the Coronavirus Act 2020 enables Parish Councils to meet virtually going forward so Parish Council business can continue as before but virtually.

Reported via Jo Pearson, Cheddon Fitzpaine PC from Lee Baker (SWTC and P Cllr at Cheddon) that SWTC will have no further consultation with Parishes because 'they aren't allowed to hold meetings'. It was noted that this contradicts Para 78 Corona Virus Act 2020. Waiting for direction from government as to how to secure virtual meetings, but the Act says meetings maybe held even if some or none of the members are in the same room. NALC and SLCC position supports virtual meetings.

#### **58/20 To discuss and consider next steps that the Parish Council should take for the community during the Coronavirus Pandemic**

Cllr Elliston provided an update on community actions. There is a need for coordination to avoid duplication and missing people. Cllr Fothergill recommended concentrating on third tier vulnerable in the community as these are people locally known about. First and second tiers are on government lists, have been identified and are being looked after by SCC the single contact number for them will be available any day now and will be given publicity. Further information about all of the community efforts and support available is on Spark Somerset's website including training to avoid the spreading of the virus.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should direct contact and support Kelly Durdan's community group as much as possible.

Attention also needs to be on looking out for and trying to protect third tier vulnerable from scammers.

A discussion followed about funding by PC for food banks or other routes. Disinclination to contribute to Taunton Food Bank, want to reach West Monkton residents – Cllr Elliston to investigate with Taunton Foodbank to see if there are families that use the foodbank in the parish. Through school -Oak Partnership – seems most efficient route as Oak Partnership is providing free meals for families not just children. Cllr Cavill to investigate further to see if the Parish Council could make a contribution. Subsidising people eating at Monkton Inn seems more easily open to abuse of the system. Kelly Durdan may be able to provide information about especially needy families – but as a Parish Council don't want to be seen to support individual families. Cllr Elliston to investigate.

Cllr Andrew Pritchard reported that measures are in place to assist with emotional support.

#### **59/20 Delegated Authority arrangements during Coronavirus Pandemic**

In view of the content of the Coronavirus Act 2020, Clerk advised that delegated authority arrangements are not required due to the ability for the Parish Council to now meet virtually.

Parish Council meetings and decision making can therefore continue to take place through virtual meetings.

No decisions were required in respect of this item.

#### **60/20 Other matters for report only**

Cllr Hall reported that there are Gypsies on side of ERR - Three traditional vans plus 8 horses, chickens, wood carvings. General agreement to leave them alone during the lockdown.

Country Park – Cllr Cavill reported that a response was sent into A Penna ref terms of payment.

Flooding - Kevin Perry reported that there were flood alerts during March bit now dry and waters returning to summer levels.

Mowgate – Cllr Besley reported that the works will take place next week.

Road closure on Redhill – Cllr Gage reported that the works will be going ahead, to put culvert under road to take water form field to north and into ditch down the side of Noahs Hill.

Cheddon Fitzpaine PC – Jo Pearson reported that the next CPFC meeting is 20th April (virtual).

**61/20 Dates of forthcoming meetings**

Future meeting dates will take place virtually through Zoom on the following dates:

**Parish Council:**

**Second Tuesday** in the month

2020: 14th Apr, 12th May, 9th Jun, 14th Jul, 11th Aug, 8th Sept, 13th Oct, 10th Nov, 8th Dec.

**Planning Committee**

**First Tuesday** in the month

2020: 7th Apr, 5th May, 2nd Jun, 7th Jul, 4th Aug, 1st Sep, 6th Oct, 2nd Nov, 1st Dec.

**Parish Surgery**

**Second Thursday** in the month at 8.30am – DROP-IN – April cancelled.

**Annual Parish Meeting:** TBC

**BACH Committee:** TBC

**Audit Working Party:** 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 9am (Virtual meeting)

**Budget and Precept:** TBC November 2020

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.15pm.



Signed Chairman

Date 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.